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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/04/2017

TAGS: PARM PREL KNNP MNUC IR CA

SUBJECT: CANADA ON NIE REGARDING IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

REF: STATE 162558

Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's Director General for the Middle East and North Africa Gordon Venner expressed appreciation to PolMinCouns on December 3 for reftel documents on the new National Intelligence Estimate on Iran's nuclear program, calling them "quite useful." He did not indicate whether Canada planned to issue any public statements on this issue.

¶2. (U) Separately, however, Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier issued a public statement on December 3 in the wake of the Iranian decision to expel the Canadian Ambassador in Teheran, apparently in retaliation for Canadian's refusal to give agreement for Iranian candidates as Ambassador to Ottawa. Bernier nonetheless underscored that "we strive to keep our lines of communication open. Canada's approach to Iran will continue to be guided by our commitment to promote freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and by our regional and international interests." A Charge d'Affaires will lead the small Embassy staff in Teheran.

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